



## 2007 EPA Community Involvement and Training Conference



# Podcast It: Enhancing Community and Public Involvement Using Digital Media

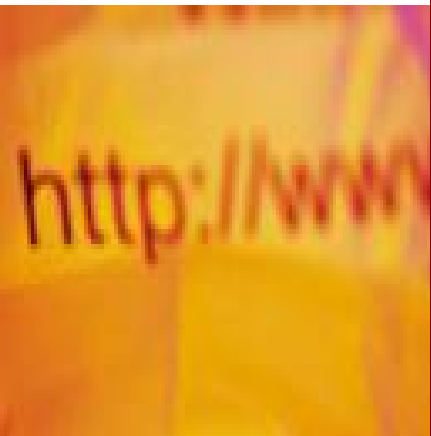
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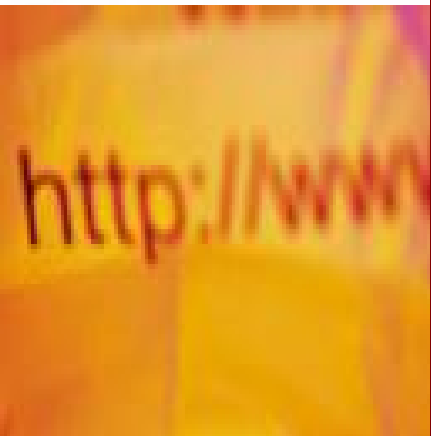


# Purpose

- Discuss digital media and its potential use in community outreach
- Produce a podcast and text message based on best practices
- Envision digital media as options to in an outreach “toolbox”

# Application to Community Involvement

- Opportunity to provide accurate, concise, and timely information
- Broadens outreach to tech savvy audiences
- Publics reached are actively seeking the information
- Can be a more interactive communication



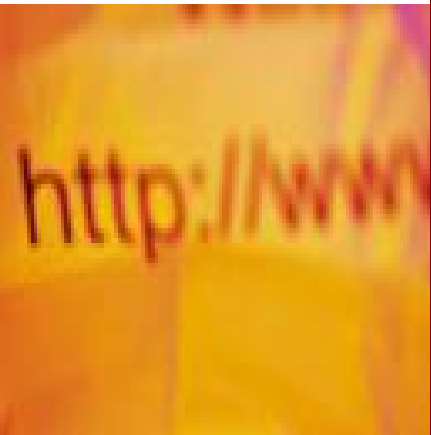


# Digital Media Explored



- Podcasts
- Text Messages
- Webisodes



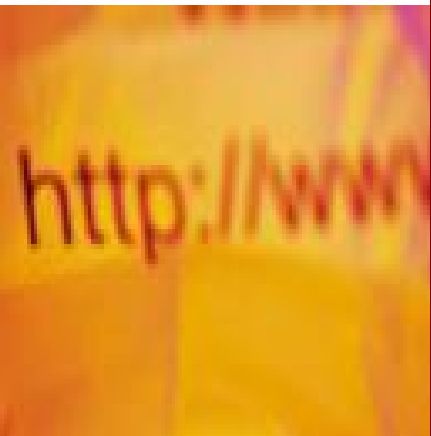


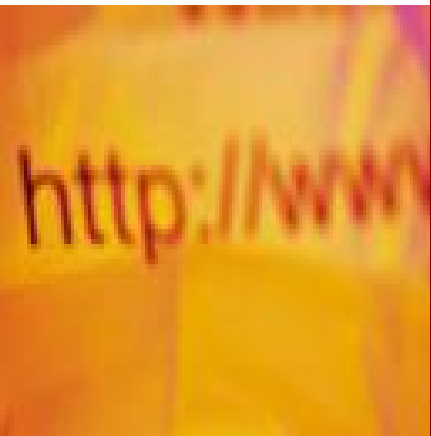
# Podcasts – What are they?

- Digital recordings made available on the Internet for downloading to an audio player
- Often in talk show format
- RSS process transmits files to individual players

# Podcasts – Value, Benefit, and Limitations

- Allows for widespread access to current information and instructions
- Digital player use expected to increase
- Can be replayed and preprogrammed to update instantly
- Requires electricity and Internet access





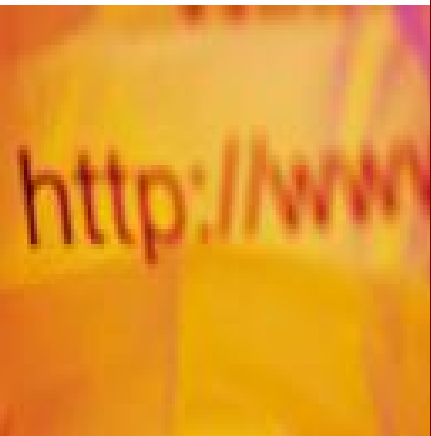
# Podcasts – What and when?

- Topics include entertainment, arts, science, hobbies, news, religions, sports, business, home and personal issues, learning, politics/government, and society and culture.
- Can be heard anytime



# Current Public Sector Application

- [http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Reference\\_Shelf/Libraries/Podcasts.shtml](http://www.usa.gov/Topics/Reference_Shelf/Libraries/Podcasts.shtml)
- EPA website has some podcast links (i.e., Risk Management Page)





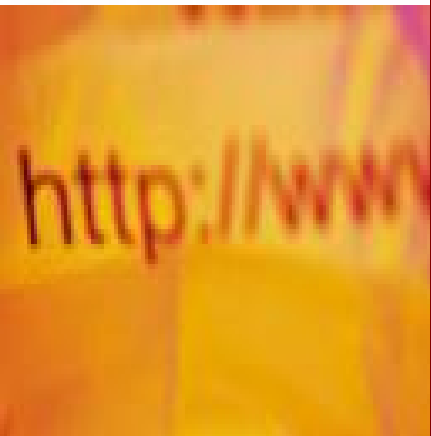
# Podcasts – What do I need to develop one? How do I do it?

## What?

- Equipment: Computer, microphone, and recording software
- An idea, message, or purpose
- Audio (video) content

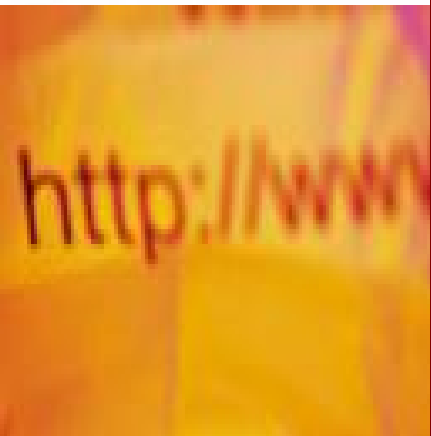
## How?

- Develop content and record
- Convert to MP3 format
- Publish MP3 file
- Create podcast newsfeed
- Add to podcast directory
- Publicize it!!



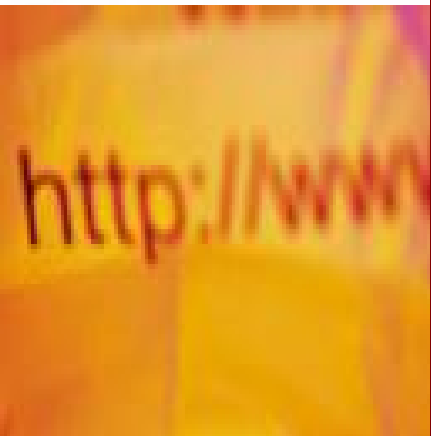
# Creating Effective Podcast Content

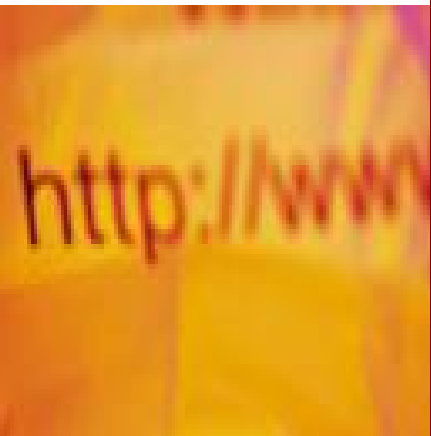
- Identify your podcast
- Use simple and clear messages
- Be yourself
- Use music to soften up a podcast
- For community outreach, give listeners a point of reference for future contact or updates



# What makes an effective Podcast?

- **Interesting** - Informative and educational
- **Short** – No longer than 20 to 30 minutes; shorter podcasts (2 to 3 minutes) also effective
- **Innovative** - Allow person to show



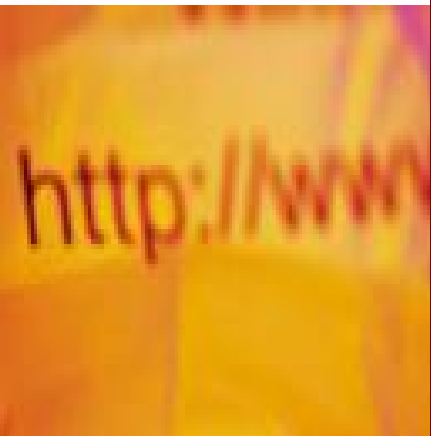


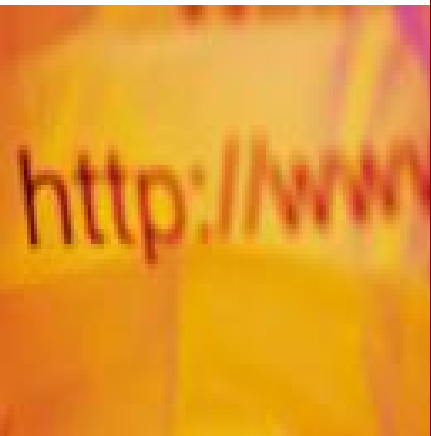
# Let's develop a Podcast

- Select topic for content
- Ask for volunteer (voice) talent
- Develop script
- Record
- Save as MP3
- Listen

# Text Messages – What are they?

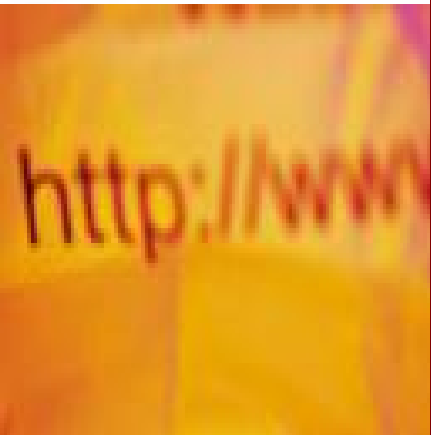
- Short text messages sent and received on a digital cell phone
- 160 characters or less
- Called Text Messaging or SMS (Short Message Service)
- “Person to person” or “person to multi-person”





# Text Messages – Advantages

- Ability to text people independent of computer/ internet access
- Multiple, simultaneous receivers
- Less intrusive, expensive, and bandwidth required than a phone call
- Form of asynchronous communication



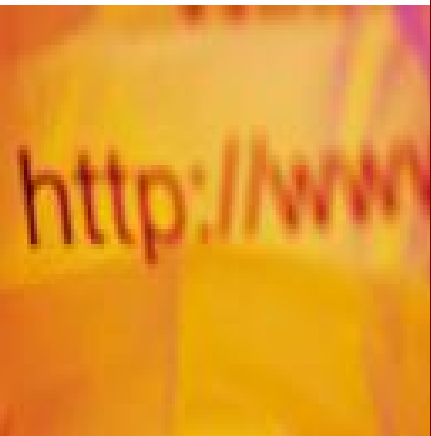
# Text Messages – How

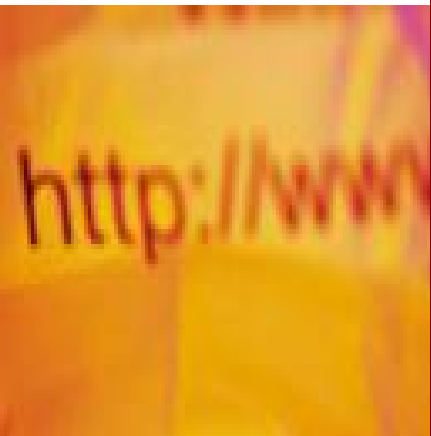
- Sent from a cellular phone or wireless messaging service on the internet
- Point-to-point using commercial services
- Point-to-multipoint uses a computer/email protocol to send simultaneously to multiple users
- Datacasting using digital TV and radio transmission



# Text Messages – Frequency and Use

- 48.7 billion sent between July and December 2005
- Used effectively during and after crises
- Also used for news alerts, financial information, group communication, advertising, business
- Extensively used by specific demographics



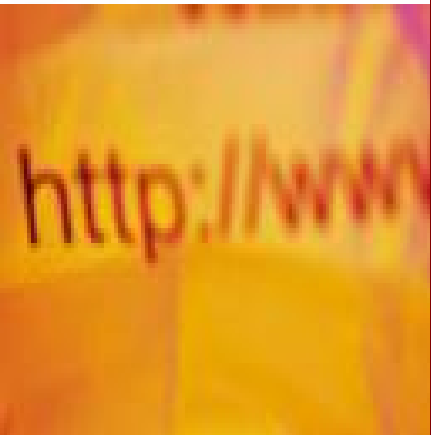


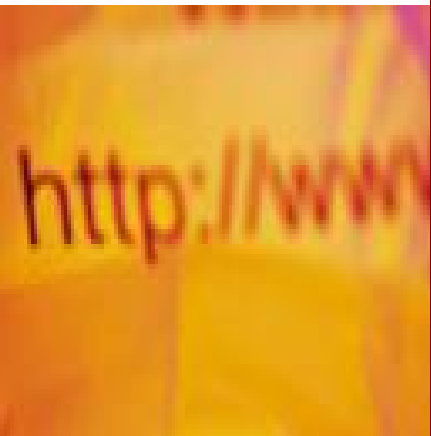
# Test Messages - Limitations

- Cost varies by country, region, and cell phone provider and averages \$0.10 per text
- Receiver pays under some plans
- Need distribution network or system in place to get message to digital providers

# Current Public Sector Application

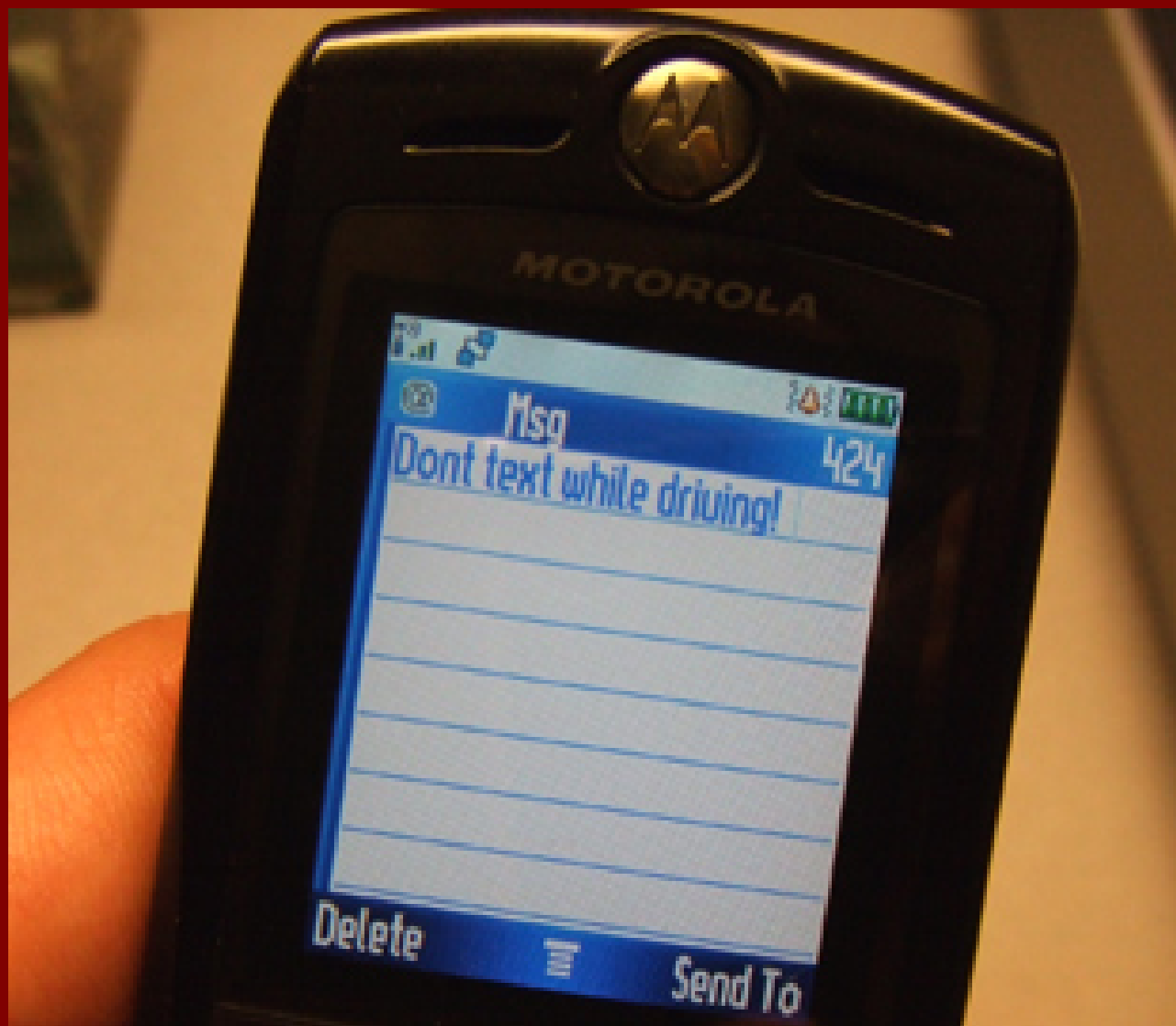
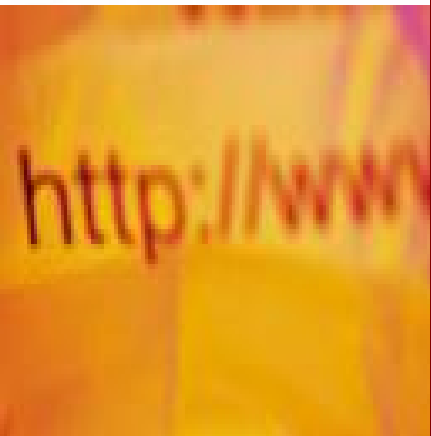
- Digital Emergency Alert System (DHS) used text messaging
- Cities like Blacksburg, VA allow residents to sign up and be alerted by text message in event of emergency
- Chinese government sent 18 million messages during typhoon season this year





# Text Messages – What makes for an effective message?

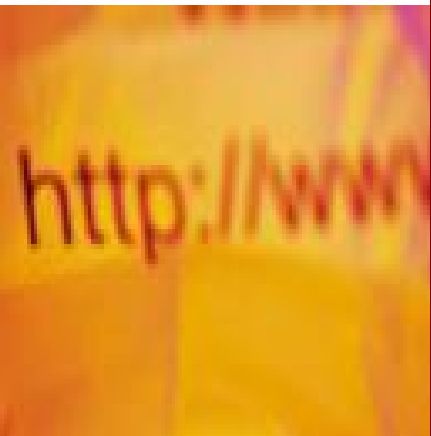
- Simple, succinct, informative
- 160 characters or less
- Provide contact and call to action
- Write/tailor copy to target public/primary audience
- Use abbreviations selectively to shorten message but keep it readable



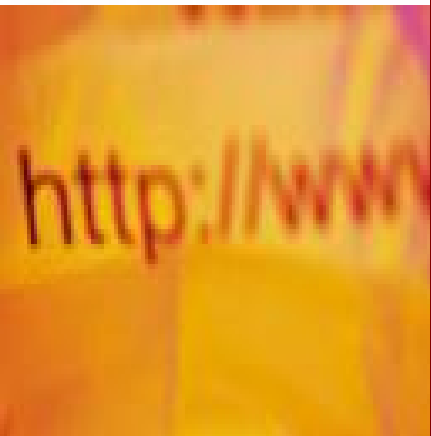
# Test your Knowledge of Text Message Lingo



- B4  
= before
- ur  
= your
- 2day  
= today
- immed  
= Immediately
- TIA  
= thanks in advance
- 2mi  
= too much information (keep your messages succinct!)
- TBD = To Be Decided
- IAE = in any event
- IAW = in accordance with
- TAFN = that's all for now
- To translate your message to "text speak" go to <http://www.lingo2word.com/index.php>



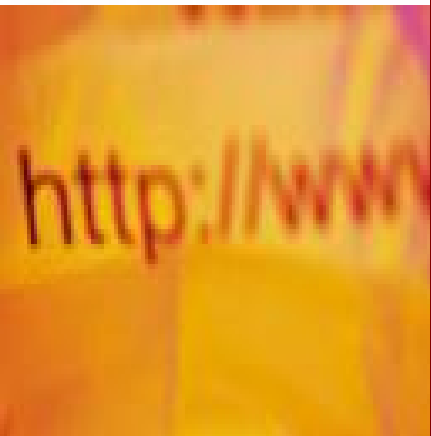




# Let's develop an effective text message

- Select topic for content
- Determine target group
- Develop copy for message; translate into txt copy
- Send (group invited to participate)
- Discuss



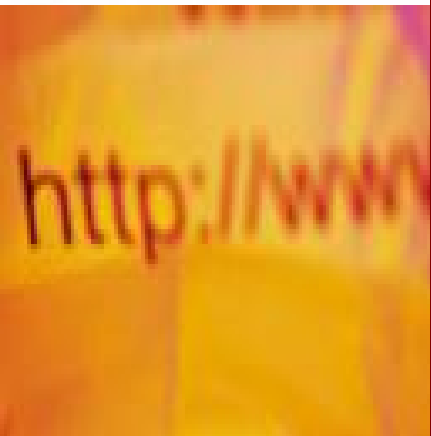


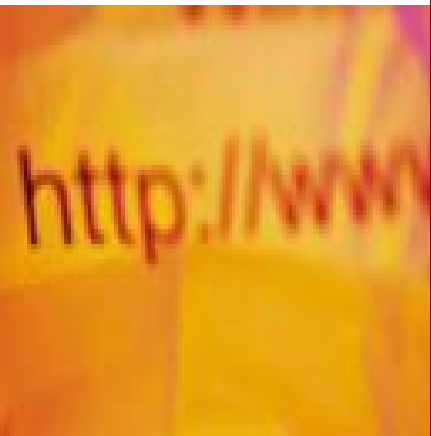
# Webisodes – What are they?

- Video programs published for the Internet
- Length varies between 90 seconds and 15 minutes
- Product of convergence of digital media, the Internet, and television

# Sample Webisodes

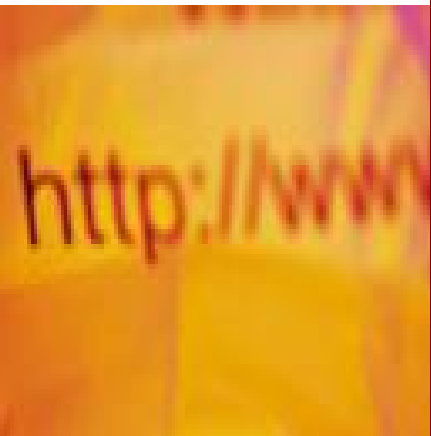
- Advocacy: [The National Nurses Organizing Committee](#)
- Education: [PBS History of US](#)
- Corporate relations: [Ford Motor Company Bold Moves](#): resulted in 2 billion website hits





# Webisodes – How, when, and how much?

- Can be downloaded and watched later, burned on a DVD or watched on a digital media player
- Ideal format for narrow-casting on cell phones
- Does not have to appeal to broad audience
- Effective in reaching younger, tech-savvy demographic



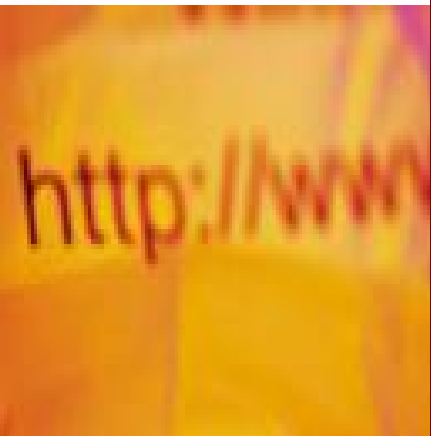
# Downside of Webisodes

- Quick format does not allow for in-depth information or character development
- Limited time to catch interest



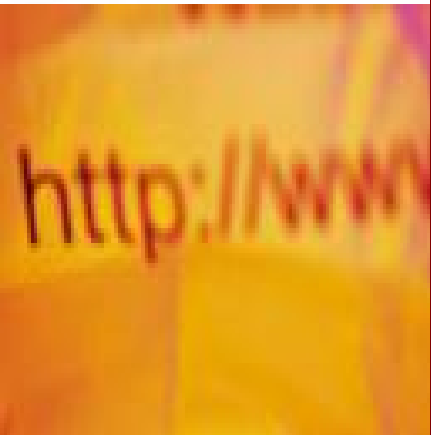
# Types of Webisodes

- Single episodes
- Preview of upcoming episodes



# Characteristics of Effective Webisodes

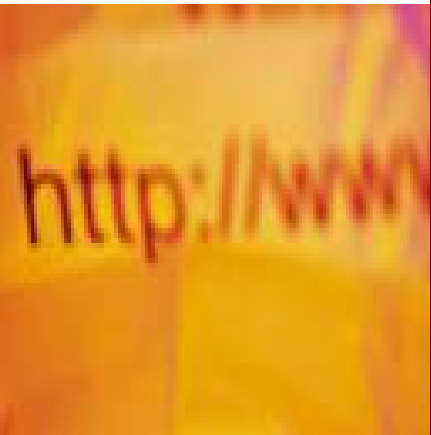
- Strong concept and story
- Includes interactive component
- Animation works well with “cartoon style” of webisodes





# Public Sector Application

- US Department of Health and Human Services: Stop Bullying Now
- NSF, The Public Health and Safety Company's "Scrub Club" Webisodes
- National Crime Prevention Center
- National Park Foundation

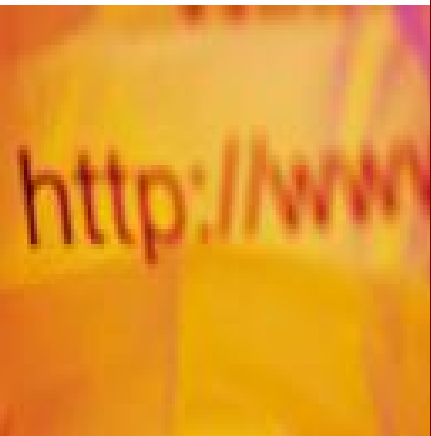




# Webisodes – What do I need to develop one?

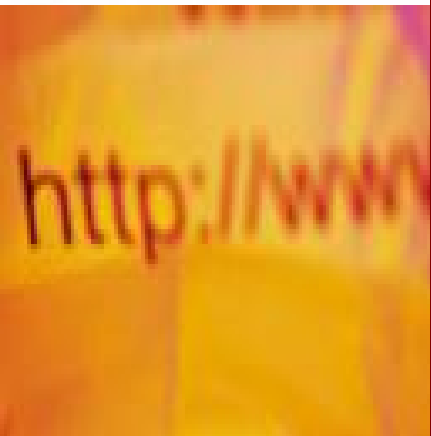


- A strong concept and story
- Basic understanding of film production
- Basic understanding of multimedia applications



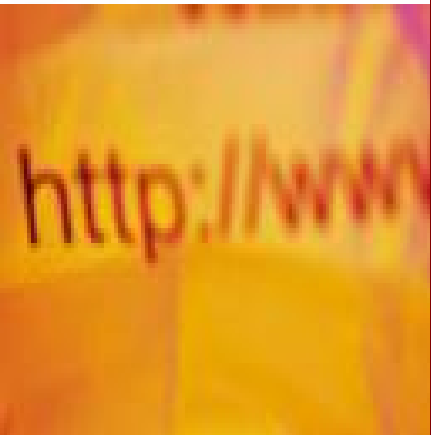
# Webisodes – What do I need to produce one?

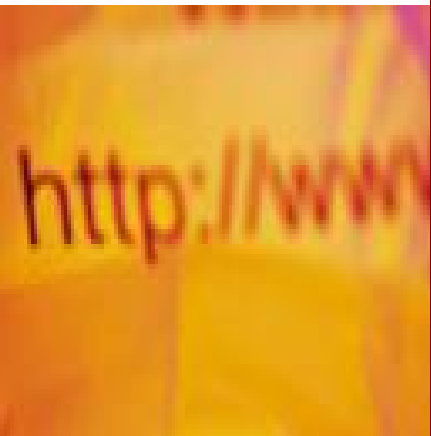
- Video (or digital) camera, computer, editing software, script, and talent (i.e., actors for on air or voice talent)



# Additional Tips

- Give your webisodes their own identity
- Include links to additional information on your Web site
- Coordinate with overall public education campaign



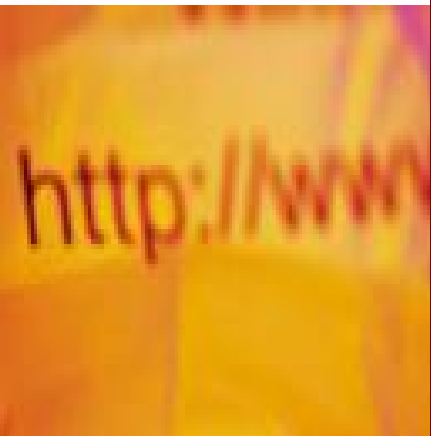


# The Marriage of Old and New Media

- Enhance and expand outreach opportunities, not replace traditional media for underserved audiences
- For example...
  - Current Outreach – Newsletter or fact sheet by mail
  - Digital Options – Summary of information sent by text message or podcast

# Conclusion

- Digital media can complement existing communication tools for community outreach
- Majority of digital media is easy to produce
- Digital media can provide timely and accurate information during a crisis or emergency





# Questions?

